

Summary

Main Features

CHANGES IN THIS ISSUE

Business Indicators, ACT (1303.8) is to be replaced by a new quarterly publication, ACT Statistical Indicators (1367.8), with the first edition scheduled for release on 31 July 2002. This new publication is an enhancement on the current monthly publication. It will present a broader range of data and contain more detailed analysis of recent movements in key demographic, economic and labour market data. ACT Statistical Indicators (1367.8) will be a tool for a wider range of clients making decisions based on ACT data. It will also include feature articles on various aspects of the ACT population and economy.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

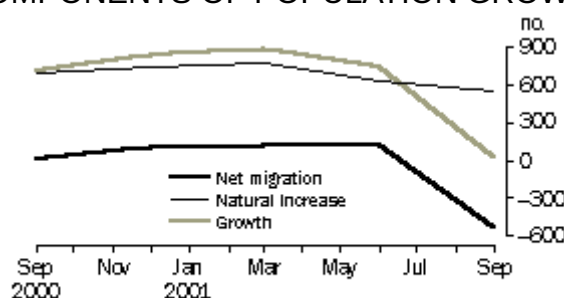
NOTABLE MOVEMENTS

Series updated in the summary of findings and tables since the March 2002 issue are: population, labour force, retail turnover, building approvals, job vacancies, tourist accommodation, business expectations, private new capital expenditure, Wage and salary earners and new motor vehicle sales.

Population

During the quarter ending September 2001, the estimated resident population of the ACT remained at 314,200, as it was during the previous quarter. Since September quarter 2000, the growth rate was 0.8%. Nationally the growth rate was 0.3% from June quarter 2001, and during the twelve months since September quarter 2000, the growth rate was 1.2%. At September 2001, the population of the ACT made up 2% of Australia's population.

COMPONENTS OF POPULATION GROWTH

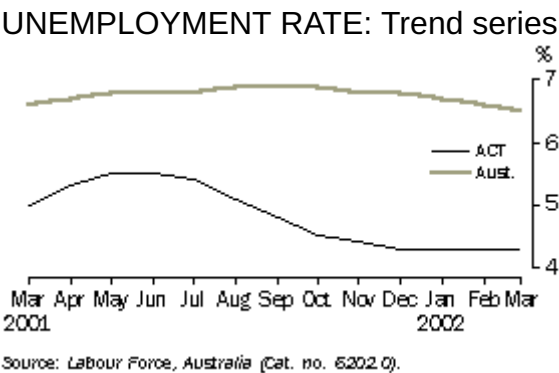


Source: Australian Demographic Statistics (Cat. no. 3301.0).

Labour force

ACT trend employment dropped 100 persons from February 2002 to 167,700 people employed for March 2002. Nationally, trend employment continued to rise (less than 1% from the previous month) to 9,293,300 people.

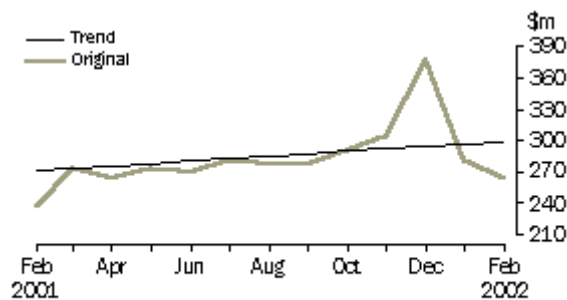
The trend unemployment rate for the ACT remained constant at 4.3% in March 2002. The national trend unemployment rate continued to fall, to 6.5% for the same period. The ACT trend labour force participation rate fell in January 2002 to 71.1%. It has declined since October 2000 (73.5%). The national trend remained steady in March 2002 at 63.9%.



Retail turnover

Retail turnover (trend) was \$299m for February 2002, a 0.8% increase from January 2002 figure. This increase was higher than the national growth rate for the same period, of 0.6%. The turnover for February 2002 was an increase of 11% from February 2001. Nationally, trend retail turnover was \$14,100m for February 2002, an increase of 8% from February 2001.

RETAIL TURNOVER Monthly Turnover



Source: Retail Trade, Australia (Cat. no. 8501.0).

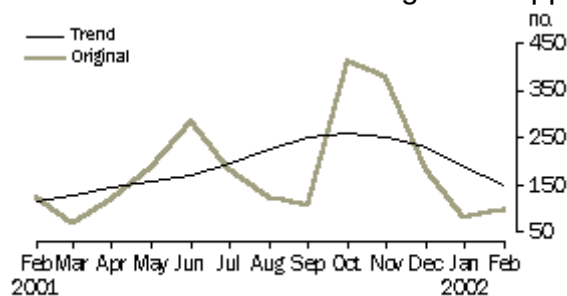
Building approvals

In February 2002 the trend dwelling units approved for the ACT was 149, down 21% from the previous month but up 28% from February 2001. Nationally there were 12,943 dwelling unit approvals, a decrease of 3% from the previous month but an increase of 38% from February 2001.

The original value of non-residential building approvals for the ACT in February 2002 was \$11m. The February 2002 figure was an increase of 136% from January 2002 but a decrease of 15% from February 2001. The original value of new residential building approvals increased by 13% to \$16m from January 2002 (\$14m).

The original value of total building approvals peaked at \$87m in October 2001. In February 2002, the value of total buildings approved was \$32m, an increase of 48% from the previous month. Nationally, the value of total building approvals in February 2002 was \$3,570m, up 21% from the previous month and up 50% from February 2001.

BUILDING APPROVALS: Dwelling Units Approved

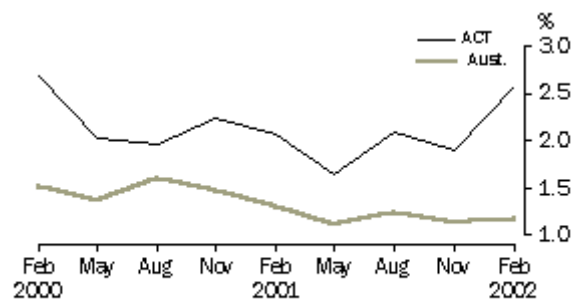


Source: Building Approvals, Australia (Cat. no. 8731.0).

Job vacancies

There were 3,900 job vacancies in the ACT in February 2002, an increase of 39% from November 2001 and an increase of 26% from February 2001. Nationally, job vacancies in February increased by 5% from November 2001 but fell 8% from February 2001.

JOB VACANCY RATES



Source: Job Vacancies, Australia (Cat. no. 6354.0).

Tourist accommodation

At December quarter 2001 the room occupancy rate for ACT hotels, motels, serviced apartments and guest houses was 57.4%. This was a decrease of 5 percentage points from the previous quarter, and a decrease of 1.6 percentage points from the December quarter 2000. Nationally, in the December quarter 2001, the room occupancy rate was 57.6%, a decrease of 1.1 percentage points from the previous quarter and a decrease of 1.2 percentage points from the December quarter 2000.

The range of tourist accommodation data showed decline during December quarter, with takings down 7% and guest arrivals down 15%.

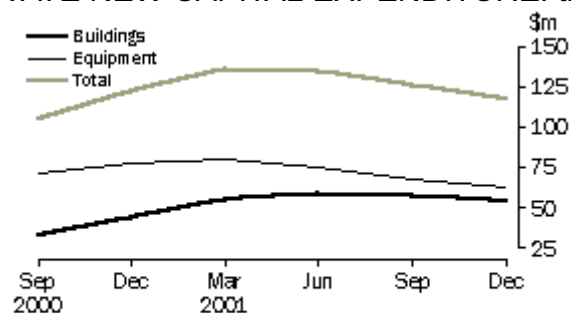
Business expectations

An increase of 2.7% is expected in trading performance (operating income) from the sale of goods and services in the ACT for the June quarter 2002. This is higher than the national expectation of 1.3% in this period. In the medium-term (March quarter 2002 to March quarter 2003), a 1.9% growth in sales is expected for the ACT. This is similar to the national expectation of 2%.

Private new capital expenditure

Trend private new capital expenditure in the ACT in the December quarter 2001 was \$117 million, a decrease of 7% from the previous quarter and a decrease of 4% from the December quarter 2000. Trend private new capital expenditure on buildings and structures decreased by 7% from the previous quarter but increased by 20% from the same period in 2000. Nationally, trend private new capital expenditure increased from the previous quarter.

PRIVATE NEW CAPITAL EXPENDITURE: trend



Source: State Estimates of Private New Capital Expenditure (Cat. no. 5645.0).

Wage and salary earners

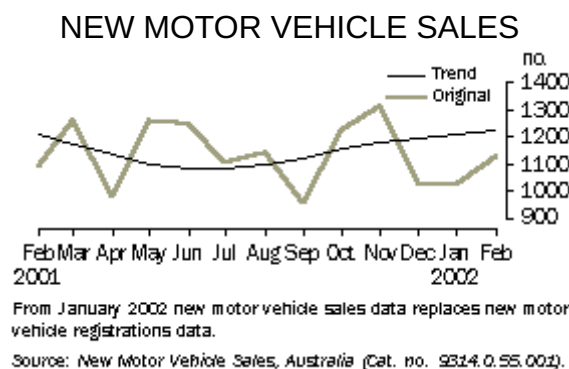
The trend number of wage and salary earners employed in the ACT increased to 160,900 people in the November quarter 2001, an increase of 1% from the previous quarter and 4% from the November quarter 2000. Excluding self-employed people, 56% of wage and salary earners in the ACT were employed in the private sector, compared with 80% nationally.

New motor vehicle sales

The ABS has discontinued the new motor vehicle registrations data that was collected from the motor vehicle registration authorities in each State and Territory. From January 2002 this data has been replaced with statistics on sales of new motor vehicles collected from the Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries.

In February 2002, the trend estimate of ACT new motor vehicle sales increased 1% from the previous month to 1,221 sales, and also increased 1% from February 2001.

There were 71,077 new motor vehicles sales nationally in February 2002. The national trend rose 2% from the previous month and 10% from February 2001.



About this Release

ABOUT THIS RELEASE

Provides a monthly summary of business-related statistics for the Australian Capital Territory, with national and other State comparisons. Includes population, Consumer Price Index, building approvals, housing finance, building commencements, established house price indexes, price indexes of building materials, engineering construction, retail turnover, labour force, job vacancies, industrial disputes, average weekly earnings, tourist accommodation, new motor vehicle registrations, wage and salary earners, wage cost index, private new capital expenditure, State accounts and business expectations. Also includes trend analysis, graphs and explanatory text. This publication is designed to be of assistance to business.

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